

**Class C Resolution Regarding Support for the University of Washington Faculty Letter of Shared Values**

WHEREAS, the University of Washington Faculty Senate recognizes that as a public institution we have a local footprint, a regional impact, and a global reach; and

WHEREAS, University of Washington faculty serve society through our teaching, research, and public engagement; and

WHEREAS, we live in a time when institutions of higher education are facing increasing scrutiny; and

WHEREAS, the attached letter signed by faculty members of the University of Washington reflects and expresses the shared commitments and values needed to meet the challenges ahead; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that University of Washington Faculty Senate re-affirms its commitment to academic research and teaching as an essential public good by endorsing the attached letter.

*Approved by:*  
Senate Executive Committee  
April 10, 2017

*Approved by:*  
Faculty Senate  
April 20, 2017

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As faculty members of a public university with a local footprint, a regional impact, and a global reach, we serve society through our teaching, research, and public engagement. At a time when institutions of higher education are facing increased scrutiny, we re-affirm our commitment to academic research and teaching as an essential public good that transcends politics and strengthens democracy.

**Democratic Tradition:** Historically, universities exist as institutions for the creation and dispersion of knowledge. Americans have been committed to higher education since our founding, with nine colleges established before the American Revolution. The emergence of the public university also has a long history beginning with the Morrill Act of 1862, which provided for a land grant university in every state. Public universities have made higher education more accessible and the recognition that higher education brings with it enormous benefits has led to a greater diversity of faculty, staff, and students, as well as broader areas of research and teaching. Today, students and faculty come from all backgrounds and from around the globe to study and pursue research at our university. We are stronger and we serve the public more fully because of that diversity and growth.

**Public Good:** As faculty at a public institution of higher education, we teach and do research to expand knowledge and improve human and environmental health conditions around the world. As teachers and scholars, we are a valuable public source of knowledge, expertise and innovation. University-led research and scholarship provide enormous social and economic benefits to our state, our country, and the world. Going forward, we commit to strengthening the presence and impact of public universities in our state and across the nation.

**Access and Excellence:** Universities build the future and this is nowhere more evident than in our work with students, both inside and outside the classroom. As teachers and researchers, we train leaders, thinkers, and innovative problem solvers who seek to build healthier communities here in Seattle and around the world. We nurture students as they engage with new ideas and develop the foundations of new knowledge in the sciences, humanities, arts, and professions. By welcoming students into our laboratories and libraries, we submerge them in the deep river of research that moves the world forward. The future of democracy is in our students and we have the sacred obligation of providing them with an excellent education.

**Critical Thinking and Inquiry:** As educators and learners we are dedicated to fostering bold inquiry and fearless debate by establishing strong foundations for critical thinking and analysis. We are responsible for creating learning environments that demand challenging explorations of ideas, concepts, and domains of knowledge. We are responsible for maintaining respectful communities. The value of honest, critical, and probing inquiry is essential in both our research and teaching, as we prepare the next generation of thoughtful leaders and lifelong learners. We commit to meeting the formidable challenge of creating an environment that supports free and critical inquiry, recognizing that such inquiry is not always comfortable or easy for any of us.

**Inclusion and Engagement:** Creating and dispersing knowledge that serves the public good is only possible in an environment in which a broad range of perspectives can be voiced and explored. Diversity is thus crucial to our success as researchers, teachers, and faculty members. Inclusion and full engagement are essential to our mission as a public institution. Innovation and creativity depend on diversity among our students, staff, and faculty. Generating new knowledge that will address the great challenges facing us all relies on a breadth and depth of engagement. We re-affirm our commitment to serving all people, across all boundaries, including geography, race, gender, class, politics, and religion.

**Academic Freedom:** As scholars, teachers, and members of the faculty community, we are firmly committed to Academic freedom as defined in “A Statement of Principle: Academic Freedom and Responsibility” (Section 24-33, 2014). We re-affirm “the freedom to discuss all relevant matters in teaching, to explore all avenues of scholarship, research, and creative expression, and to speak or write without institutional discipline or restraint on matters of public concern as well as on matters related to shared governance and the general welfare of the University.” We support every one of our colleagues and students who face harassment of any form in their pursuit of knowledge and understanding. We also recognize that the privilege of academic freedom creates important responsibilities. As teachers, mentors, and scholars, our collective power to generate and share knowledge is formidable, and we pledge to hold ourselves to the highest standards of truth and justice.

If you would like to sign the letter, please follow [this link](#) and submit your name at the bottom.

Thank you.